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FROM: THE OFFICE OF U.S. SENATOR BOB DOLE
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WICHITA, KANSAS, July 3 -- U.S. Senator Bob Dole (R-Kans.) today said President Nixon's August trip to Rumania "may be one of the major diplomatic missions -- and gambles -- in history".

In a statement issued here, Dole said, "Not since FDR's trip to Yalta 25 years ago has any American President set foot in a Communist country."

"Rumania is a particularly logical choice of Iron Curtain countries for the President to visit first", he added. "It has built strong diplomatic and trade ties with the West. It did not participate in the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia and has maintained strict neutrality in the Arab-Israeli dispute."

"At the same time, it is a gamble because Rumania is at a crucial point in its relationship with the Soviet Union, and our own position is somewhat delicate since we are on the eve of arms talks with the Russians."

"Although it is quite likely that the Nixon-Ceausescu meeting will ^{not} immediately and materially change the course of history", he added, "the importance of the meeting can hardly be stressed enough. The gamble is whether the Soviets will consider Nixon's visit as provocative -- an inevitable result even a few short years ago -- or as Nixon himself sees it -- a positive, constructive move toward fuller understanding and cooperation between the world's two great powers."

"The President is to be commended for putting action into his belief that the U.S. is sincere and determined to help replace the world bitterness, doubt and confrontation of the postwar era with U.S. initiatives toward good will, negotiation and peace."